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From the Office of the Director of Health

Smoke Plume Expected to Create Unhealthy Air

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department cautions area residents that two significant smoke plumes from large prescribed burns are expected to move into the Springfield area this evening and will likely create unhealthy air conditions. As a precaution, the air quality index has been raised to “red” or “unhealthy” for the next few hours.

“This means that anyone in the area may begin to experience negative health effects such as coughing, difficulty breathing, throat irritation and chest discomfort,” says air quality control coordinator Brian Adams. “Members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects such as worsened asthma.”

While the air quality index remains in the red zone, active children and adults, and people with lung disease such as asthma, should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors. Everyone else, especially children, should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors.

“We estimate that the smoke plumes will arrive in the Springfield area between 5:00 and 6:00 pm,” adds Adams. “It is difficult to predict how long they will impact our area.”

The smoke plumes are a result of two large burns in the National Forests of approximately 2,200 acres in north Arkansas and 6,000 acres in south Missouri.

To view a satellite image of the smoke plumes, go online to <http://adds.aviationweather.gov/satellite/displaySat.php?region=ICT&isingle=multiple&itype=vis>.

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